

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting7th March 2013

1. Title of Item/Report

Scrutiny Review of Quality and Sufficiency of Childcare

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented the Children & Young People Select Committee findings following the Scrutiny Review of Quality and Sufficiency of Childcare.

It was outlined that childcare played a crucial role in the lives of most families, enabling parents to go out to work to contribute to a decent family income when they had very young children. The review examined the Ofsted framework and work to engage with providers to improve quality, the view of providers in Stockton borough, and the changes to free childcare entitlement. The Committee's recommendations aimed to tackle the barriers to engagement by using peer support and networking, as well as improving the information available to parents and supporting the officer project teams work in overseeing the introduction of the two year old offer.

RESOLVED that:

1. the information available to parents when choosing childcare be expanded to provide information about whether providers are engaging with SBC Journey to Outstanding as well as information about OFSTED ratings;
2. in order to foster closer working between settings, childminders and schools, locality based networks (possibly based around Children's Centres) be considered; the purpose of the networks would be to:
 - a. share good practice
 - b. provide peer support
 - c. ease transitions between settings/schools
 - d. embed a single approach to EYFS profiles
 - e. demonstrate partnership working
 - f. foster early intervention
 - g. provide a consultation platform

3. a model of commissioned peer support be considered utilising good quality childminders from within the network in a mentoring role;
4. the Admissions Booklet and other information provided to parents be revised to clarify that attendance at a nursery will not give automatic entitlement to attend a school;
5. the Officer Project Board continue to oversee work on the introduction of the two year old offer and engage with the network of providers on delivery, subject to detailed analysis of the Government's recent announcement on childcare provision;
6. Officers continue to work towards finding solutions to meet gaps in provision where they are identified in order to provide sufficient childcare places across the Borough.

3. Reasons for the Decision

In Stockton there has been an improvement in the percentage of childminders and childcare settings achieving good or outstanding at their inspection over the last year. However, there are still some improvements to be made if the Borough is to match the ratings achieved both in the North East and England as a whole. In addition, in October 2010, the Government announced that it would extend the free entitlement of 15 hours per week childcare available to every three and four year old to all disadvantaged two year olds

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 4 - Scrutiny Review of Quality and Sufficiency of Childcare as his wife was a childminder.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 15th March 2013

Proper Officer
11 March 2013